THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) information is being collected from the State Government of Delhi.

Construction of Gurdwara in Puri

441. MS. PRAMMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a hi-tech revolving Gurdwara, the first of its kind in the country, would be contructed near the sea beach in Puri, Orissa, to mark the visit of Guru Nanak, the first Guru of Sikhs, to this holy city in 1506;

(b) whether this Gurdwara has already started functioning on a temporaty basis; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Ministry of Culture has no role to play when it comes to construction of places of worship. However, the Ministry of Culture could lend its logistical support if and when a private initiative is taken commenmorate the religious events which have historical significance.

Heritage sites in NER

442. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nine national sites in the North Eastern Region (NER) are proposed to be recommended as World heritage sites;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are aware that Orissa is one of the historical heritage centres of the country which are the most sought after religious hubs in the World;

(d) if so, whether there is a proposal to recommend any of such centre as World heritage; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) There is no proposal to recommend a site from Orissa for inclusion in the World Heritage list because the World Heritage Committee in its 28th session held in Suzhou, China in 2004 has restricted only one cultural nomination per year. The Government has already proposed for Majuli Island in Assam for 2006 and is resubmitting nomination dossier for Red Fort. Further, as per provisions of the Operational Guidelines for implementation of the World Heritage Convention each State Party has to submit to the World Heritage Committee a tentative list of sites which it intends to nominate for inscription on the World Heritage List.

Remains of cities near Surat

†443. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH; Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Archaeological Survey of India has recently found one thousand year old remains of cities and village near Surat in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) and (b) the excavations carried out by the Indian Archaeological Society, New Delhi, at the Centrally protected site of Kamrej, District Surat, Gujarat, during the field season 2002-03, have brought to light remains of an early Historical settlement, with industrial centres of iron making, shell crafting, bead making, etc. The evidence unearthed further indicated that the site was a trade port, having overseas contacts with the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea.

Valley of Flowers in Uttaranchal

444. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World famous Valley of Flowers in the Uttaranchal Himalayas has been declared a natural world heritage site by UNESCO; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.